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BELCHER

DEVELOPMENT OF A RECREATION OPPORTUNITY GUIDE FOR THE JEFFERSON NATIONAL FOREST

Prepared for

Clemson University Short Course

Professional Development For Outdoor Recreation Management

By

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ABSTRACT

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Title: Development of a Recreation Opportunity Guide for the Jefferson National Forest

Abstract: The Jefferson National Forest has been experiencing difficulty in providing information to the public on recreation opportunities. Since 1974 developed sites have been built, dispersed use has increased, but informational materials have remained limited. In an effort to develop a system for providing information to recreationists at minimal cost, the Forest has undertaken development of a Recreation Opportunity Guide (ROG). Development of the ROG has been initiated with production of informational sheets on developed sites. Format and types of information to include are examined.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Since 1974 information for the public on recreation opportunities available on the Jefferson National Forest has gradually become inadequate. When the Forest recreation map (1 inch = 4 miles) and Regional Directory for developed sites were discontinued in 1974 and '69 respectively, the Forest no longer had a quality handout covering recreation information for developed sites on the Forest. Concurrently interest in dispersed activities such as hiking was increasing rapidly with no subsequent development of information on Forest opportunities. Funding reductions, personnel turnovers, and lack of direction have led to an array of brochures, pamphlets, and sheets developed in response to the public's inquiries. Private efforts have been made to provide information to the public where the Forest has failed to do so (notably trail information), but the Forest has not benefitted substantially from these materials because of their limited distribution.

Lack of Direction and Standards

One problem the Forest has faced in providing information has been the lack of direction or conflicting direction on publications. In 1980 the USDA Design Center came out with a Visual Management Manual (AD 791) directing the format for publications. Region 8 staff balked at the new guidelines because of the restrictions on creativity and custom design.

At the same time the Design Center developed for the Forest a "family" of brochures for Mount Rogers National Recreation Area. This family not only failed to conform to the Department's own guidelines but also "unjustifiably" used two colors of ink, a fact which later caused its rejection for printing.

With the 1981 moratorium on printing, Forest supplies of brochures on campgrounds and trails quickly disappeared. As personnel turned over, many of the old brochures were forgotten or the originals lost. New substitutes were made where a particular person had an interest, but many of these efforts lacked artistic design, editorial polish, reproductive quality, and compliance with any standards.

The format and requirements not only for publications but also for maps have been changing. The Regional geometronics section has been trying to follow the national direction to produce for each Forest a visitor's guide, secondary map (1/2" = 1 mile), and primary maps (1" = 2000'). Because of the long shoelace configuration of the Jefferson, production of these maps has been slow. The visitor's guide had to be completely reworked in order to show just the major access roads to recreation facilities. The original secondary map was rejected by the Forest Supervisor because of its bulky size, clutter of information, and inaccurate data. Even with its size, the map includes only five of the Forest's six districts. The Forest stretches across over 100 primary maps and several of these have not yet been completed.

The Jefferson has a set of District Sportsmen's maps produced in cooperation with the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries. These maps show National Forest ownership, contours, roads and trails, and recreation facilities at a scale of one inch to the mile (approximately 1:62,500). The maps are not produced by the Forest Service geometronics section and are considered "unofficial" and "not standard." Because of the delays in production of standard Forest maps, however, Forest personnel have relied heavily on the Sportsmen's maps for visitor information and resource data. This reliance on the Sportsmen's maps has continued to be a source of irritation with the Regional geometronics group.

Demand

While dollars for publications have dwindled and informational materials remained scanty, the facilities on the Forest have been expanding. Construction at Mount Rogers National Recreation Area has included the day use and group areas at Beartree, a horse and sportsmen's camping area at Hussy Mountain, and camping facilities at Raven Cliffs. On other districts small areas with simple facilities have been built as money and manpower allowed. Five of these areas are designed to accommodate horses and are a direct response to the rapid increase in horseback riding on the Forest. In 1983 the Forest received a major recreation development at the North Fork of Pound Lake in a transfer from the Corps of Engineers.

While the number of sites has increased, use at many of the older sites has decreased. Budget cuts have led to facility deterioration. Volunteer

hosts and campers themselves help clean up the heavily used campgrounds, but the less crowded ones seem to experience more and more vandalism and deterioration. With Regional allocation of dollars tied to use, the vicious circle continues of inadequate funding causing poor maintenance leading to less use and then more maintenance problems.

Through this period the Forest has also experienced a surge of dispersed use, particularly in hiking and horseback riding. This use can be traced to the increasing interest nationwide in environmental protection, physical fitness, outdoor activities, and association with nature. Populations and businesses along Interstate 81 through the Forest have increased. Enrollment at some of the local universities and colleges has almost doubled since 1970. While interest from these new users has been keen, Forest information on opportunities has been minimal.

Poor Visibility

A common complaint of recreationists and of state and local tourist and travel boards is that recreation opportunities on the Jefferson are kept secret rather than publicized. This complaint is well founded after years of few publications at all and now times when free handouts are very limited. Another cause of the complaint is that many facilities are difficult to find. State road maps do not show all the roads leading to Forest facilities and directional signing at intersections has been poor because of sign costs, vandalism, and complaints from the private sector about competition. Interstate signing has been almost non-existent.

At the same time there has been continuing turnover of clerks and professional personnel. At times those calling for information are not adequately answered because personnel are just not that familiar with the facilities.

Objective

The Forest objective in developing a Recreation Opportunity Guide (ROG) is to develop a system for providing information to recreationists at minimal cost. The ROG system was selected because it offers flexibility for a Forest or District, an opportunity to start a system and expand gradually, opportunity for frequent updates, and low costs.

For terms of the Clemson project, the ROG has been completed for developed sites only. The reasons for this are that there is some private material available on trails, field work for trails and dispersed activities would be difficult in winter, and the Forest has been making an effort this year to increase developed site use through newspaper articles in targeted cities and an exhibition at the Southern Living Show in Charlotte, N.C.

A secondary objective for the project was to investigate the feasibility of developing an interpretive association that could assume some costs of providing information for the public and assist Forest personnel and the public by marketing appropriate private materials which currently have limited outlets and distribution.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review was divided into two parts: one dealing with the Recreation Opportunity Guide and one dealing with interpretive associations.

Recreation Opportunity Guide

Forest Service Direction and Input

The Recreation Opportunity Guide Manual was produced in Region 1 in 1978. This is the only official Forest Service direction on Recreation Opportunity Guides (ROGs). Because this is an in-Service tool for providing visitor information, there is no literature or research on this particular technique.

Prior to development of a format for the Jefferson ROG, every Region was contacted for ideas, experiences, and sample ROG sheets. These contacts provided numerous suggestions on technical preparation of the sheets. The Methodology chapter discusses these points.

Nationwide contacts, particularly at the District level, revealed an array of attitudes toward the ROG. Generally, at the Regional Office level of Regions using the system widely, there was strong support for the ROG system. Most Regions have made adjustments to the Region 1 system or have allowed the Forests and Districts to do so. Region 3 is issuing its own set of ROG instructions. Region 5 has issued a Manual supplement directing formation of their version of

ROG sheets. In some Regions, ROGs have been developed at the Forest level, in others at the District level.

Contacts from the Forests and Districts show more variety in attitudes toward the ROG. One Forest commented that it was easier to make the sheets than to get the District personnel and public to use them. He encouraged District clerical involvement in development of the ROG to help alleviate this problem. One District technician commented that he did not like the sheets or system. He was being directed, however, to develop sheets, because the adjoining District had an ROG and claimed the public liked it. On another District the Ranger, who was selling his hiking ROG through an interpretive association, had found it to be the biggest money making item, selling over 1,000 copies a season at $10 each. The comments in general revealed that success of the ROG depends greatly on the District-level commitment to it.

Information to Include in the ROG

The clientele using the National Forest changed significantly in the 1960s and '70s with increasing public mobility and leisure time and the nationwide emphasis on fitness and the outdoors. Local users who have "grown up" in the woods are no longer the majority of National Forest recreationists. (ROG Manual, 1978) Better equipment, beautiful photography in magazines, and media romanticization of the good old days in the country have led many uninitiated recreationists to the National Forests and Parks. Many of these people go to the only area they can

find or have read about and are undisturbed by the crowds or conditions they encounter. (Bryan, 1982) Many come unprepared; in fact several have died on the Jefferson National Forest through ignorance or carelessness.

The ROG can introduce recreationists to the variety of activities available on the Forest. It can help prepare newcomers for the activities they seek, direct and disperse use to less well known areas, and help the experienced and inexperienced identify areas, facilities, and activities that will fulfill their expectations. (Schreyer, 1983) It can also dispel negative images of crowding, cleanliness, safety, and costs. (LaPage and Cormier, 1977)

The ROG will probably be an antecedent condition to the recreation experience as information is used to plan a trip. With this frame of reference each sheet should address how a site or area can fulfill social and psychological needs of the user for such things as sensory arousal, gregariousness, personal space, and regulation. (Schreyer,1983) The recreationist may be looking for challenge of his skills (self-esteem), social contact (affiliation), or merely escape from daily routine (physiological well being). (Satterthwait; Schreyer, 1983) The ease of access, management regulations, and social interaction are important factors directly influencing the experience of solitude, freedom, physical challenge, or communion with nature which the user may be expecting. (Schreyer, 1983)

While a manager cannot control a recreationist's experience, he can provide a variety of settings and opportunities for the user. Campers who want comfort and fellowship will seek one type of area; those who want quiet and communion with nature will seek another. Descriptions in an ROG should be as straightforward and unromanticized as possible, noting particularly changes from previous years. The user then judges and chooses for himself. A user's satisfaction is strongly related to his expectations, and those returning to an area for an experience found there previously will be disappointed if conditions have changed drastically. (Schreyer, 1983)

The ROG can be important in redistributing use on the Forest. To do so,however, it must be directed toward a target group, consider factors influencing their experience, and then highlight the uniqueness of particular areas or settings which could provide this experience. (More, 1983) Such information is particularly important for activities where the environment is critical to the experience, rather than just a backdrop to the experience. These users are usually the more skilled, experienced ones (Bryan, 1983) who require more specific settings to have a quality experience and who are less tolerant of inappropriate behaviors in others. (Schreyer, 1983; Jacob, 1977)

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) classifications can be useful in conveying to the user the remoteness of an area and social interaction he may encounter. (Bacon, 1983) Users who have been displaced from one area because of crowding or site development may be able to find a

substitutable activity or setting through ROS information in the ROG. The ROG should help a user weigh the trade-offs between one area and another. (Schreyer, 1983; Stankey) For example on the Jefferson hikers displaced from the Mount Rogers Crest Zone because of crowding may be willing to accept the more difficult access to Chestnut Ridge and Beartown in order to achieve the physical challenge and social isolation. A hiker who is only satisfied at Mount Rogers may change to cross-country skiing for isolation.

The ROG can be a public relations as well as visitor information tool. The introductory sheets for each activity can be used to explain the Forest Service's role in recreation and its multiple use mission. Recreationists may be more tolerant of other users and other management activities with understanding of their purpose and niche in the total management picture.

Interpretive Associations

Interpretive associations have not been the subject of extensive research or literary review, because they are merely functional groups assisting agencies with providing to the public information and interpretation of natural resources. While interpretive associations are discussed briefly in the Forest Service Manual 1660, the most extensive coverage of the background and operation of interpretive associations is contained in the Utah State Recreation Short Course project paper by David Pratt III entitled "Interpretive Associations--A Means of Meeting Forest Visitor Needs" and in the transcribed speech of Harold Harper given at the 1983 Region 8 Recreation Staff Officers' Workshop.

Interpretive associations were started in the National Park Service, the first founded at Yosemite in 1920. The Forest Service first became involved with an association in 1967. Many of the early Forest Service associations were National Park Service associations expanded to serve other agencies. Early association agreements were handled as cooperative agreements. With passage of PL 95-224 in 1977 clarifying Federal grants and cooperative agreements, the Forest Service discontinued starting new cooperative agreements. Group volunteer agreements, special use permits, and memorandums of understanding have been used since to handle the relationships. (Harper, 1983)

Interpretive associations are classed as educational and have a tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code. They are incorporated under state laws. Profits must be used for the educational and visitor service activities for which the association was established. Association activities may include developing, publishing, and selling brochures, maps, and other literature; acquiring equipment for visitor centers; supporting interpretive and educational programs; financing collections and libraries, and any other educational or interpretive services which enhance public enjoyment of resources of public lands. (Harper, 1983)

An interpretive association may serve more than one outlet and more than one agency depending on its charter and by-laws. Establishment of a new association requires strong local interest, a business-minded board of directors, initial capital for purchase of stocks and physical fixtures,

and either association staff or Forest Service employees to handle sales and money. An association can be a valuable means of improving a Forest's visitor information services program. (Harper, 1983; Pratt, 1983)

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Recreation Opportunity Guide

The format and organization for the Jefferson's Recreation Opportunity Guide were decided after consultation with other Regions and examination of their methods and format. Their experiences indicated that the most successful ROGs in terms of completion, updating, and use were those with involvement of District personnel. Such involvement could also contribute to the objective of maximizing information for the public at minimal cost. A format was sought, therefore, which would facilitate District development of sheets and involvement in the ROG while still maintaining uniformity and continuity through oversight from the Supervisor's Office.

District Involvement

Involvement of District personnel in formation and maintenance of the ROG is conducive to its use in-Service and with the public. Initially, all District clerks were contacted to inform them of the project and solicit input on kinds of information helpful to them in answering questions. District Rangers were committed to the project through its inclusion in the Forest objectives. Resource assistants and recreation technicians became involved in development and correction of the sheets for developed sites. Ideas from these individuals were incorporated into the format, organization, and supplemental information to be provided in the ROG.

Format and Organization

The basic organization of most ROGs is by activity. Under each activity there is a basic introductory sheet telling about the activity, any special rules and regulations, and organization of that chapter. Individual sheets for sites, trails, or areas follow the introduction.

The Jefferson ROG is, like the others, organized by activity. Those activities at developed sites - camping, picnicking, swimming, and boating - have been completed as part of the Clemson project. Under each activity, sheets are arranged in alphabetical order by facility name. The alphabetical arrangement was selected in preference to the original Region 1 numbering system because it allows for addition of new pages at any time without the necessity of renumbering pages and for rapid location of a specific known facility. Lists of facilities by District allow cross-reference for those interested only in facilities in one specific area.

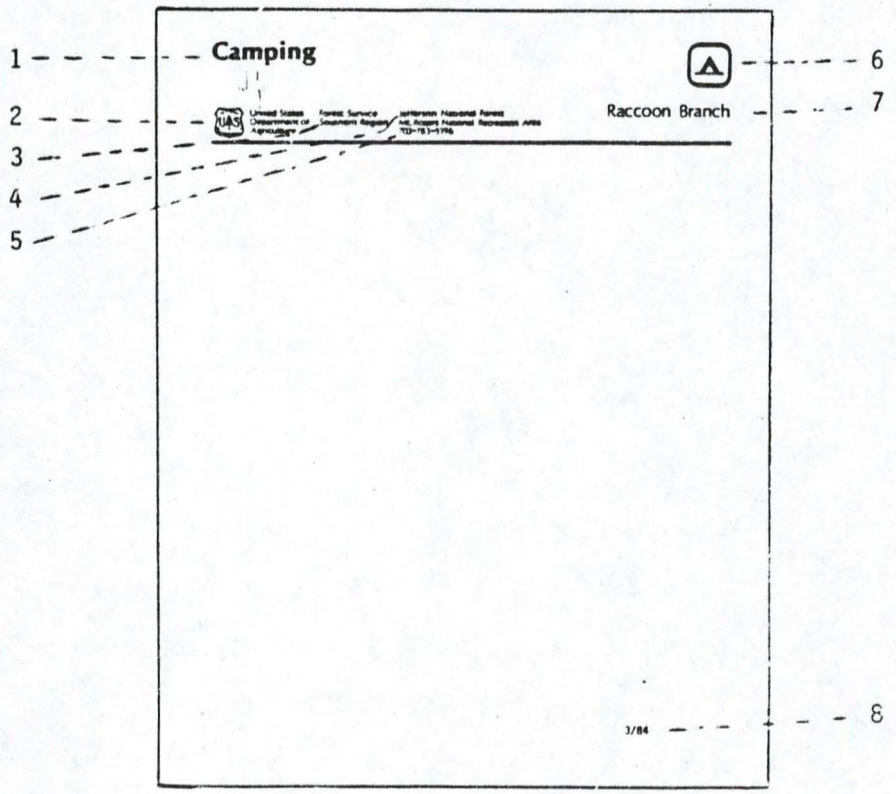
To facilitate future development of sheets on the District level, master sheets for each activity were made and then copies offset. Districts can type information directly onto these sheets and complete them without drafting or professional services. After completing a sheet, the District submits it to the ROG coordinator in the Supervisor's Office for review to ensure uniformity and for duplication and distribution to other units. If a District comes up with a new activity that has not been developed Forest-wide, a master can be made in the Supervisor's Office and copies distributed. Districts are encouraged to

develop sheets to meet all their public information needs in the order in which demand dictates.

Reproduction of sheets is done in the Supervisor's Office because the Xerox 8200 machine provides copies superior to those that could be made on the Districts. For quantities greater than 100, offset duplicating press is used. If time permits, these are sent to the Regional Office print shop to save the Forest money.

Page Design

Selection of the items included on the master sheets as part of the page headings is explained on the following pages, item by item.



1. Activity in 24 point Optima bold type.

The 24 point Optima bold type was selected to be in compliance with the USDA Visual Management Manual (AD 791) Format VI specifications. If more than one activity is needed on a sheet, such as "Camping-Picnicking," the second activity can be added with Chartpak press-on type. A supply of the Chartpak is available for each District and can be ordered through GSA.

Positioning of the activity title is consistent with the majority of ROGs. Variations to this positioning as seen in some of the Region 6 sheets were considered inferior to the original layout.

2. Forest Service shield, followed by department and agency identification, Optima type.

The department and agency identifications were included for consistency with Regional requirements on identification. Region 5 has positioned this information at the bottom of the page for consistency with USDA Visual Management Manual format. Positioning at the top was not considered by the Forest to be specifically inconsistent and was more conducive to inclusion of items 3, 4, and 5.

Optima type was used for consistency with USDA Visual Management Manual Format VI specifications. Standard sheets of press-on shields and identification have been developed in Region 8 only in Helvetica type. New sheets in Optima type are needed.

3. Regional identification, Optima type.

Identification of the Region was included to be consistent with Regional publications and to give the user an immediate idea of the part of the country involved.

4. Forest identification, Optima type.

Identification of the Forest was included to tie together all the Forest ROG sheets and to conform to Regional publication practices. Input following development of the initial forms suggested inclusion of the state. "Virginia" was, therefore, added on the cover and could be included on future sheets.

5. District identification and phone number, Optima type.

This information was included to give the user a ready reference for further information and emergencies. District addresses and phone numbers are also included at the beginning of the ROG with the Forest map. On the master sheet, the District and number were omitted. Labels with these lines are available for easy application.

6. Activity symbol, black on white.

A major problem in appearance of ROG sheets from other Regions is that the white on black activity symbols fade when xeroxed. The reverse image activity symbols were provided by Region 6 and appeared superior to the black ones for reproduction. Sheets of symbols on sticky back paper are available to the Districts.

7. Facility or area name, 18 point Optima type.

The name of the facility frequently was lost below the heading on sheets from other Forests. The name was, therefore, included as part of the heading. Supplies of Chartpak type are available for each District. Facility names can be added quickly with the pre-on letters.

8. Date

The date was added to the bottom of each sheet to let Forest Service personnel and the public know the relative age of the data. The date will help in keeping the sheets updated. It also tells the user the potential for change in conditions since the information was compiled.

Developed Site Sheet

Those items included on the developed site sheets were selected in light of information from the literature review and suggestions from other Forests. Each item included on the sheets was designed to meet a specific need of the recreationist. While some of this data is easily extracted from Forest Service RIM reports, other items were included to give the user an idea of the type experience he might encounter. Sheets are typed in letter gothic IBM type, which is available on every District.

The rationale for each item on the sheets was:

1. Location and map - To orient the user and give him a reference point which could be found on any state map. The map is not designed to replace a Forest Service map but merely to orient the user. Maps were traced on mylar from state highway maps.

2. Access - To provide specific directions so a user could find an area even if signs had been vandalized.

3. Facilities - To provide standard information on the facilities available and to imply the level of development (e.g. flush toilets vs vault toilets, paved roads vs gravel roads).

4. Attractions, vegetation, climate, elevation - To give the user a "feel" for the area. Attractions help him know what is available to do and what type users might be there. Vegetation implies how the area looks. A user can infer how much screening sites may have by knowing whether the understory is rhododendron or hardwood sprouts, the overstory pine or hardwoods. Climate and elavation give a feel for the weather.

5. Fee, season - To give standard operating information and costs.

6. Pattern of use - To help the user gauge the social interaction and level of crowding he should expect on week days, week ends, and holidays. The variance may also help adjust use patterns and encourage more evenly distributed use of a site as recreationists seek less crowded times.

7. Recreation Opportunity Spectrum - To tell the remoteness, social contact and development found not only on the site but on adjacent lands.

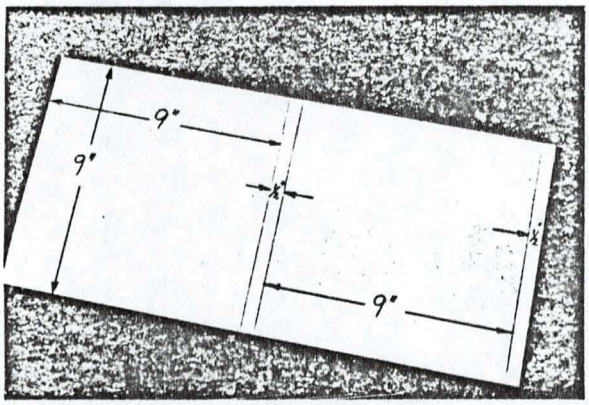
Dispenser Design

Two types of dispensers are being used for the ROG information. Three-ring binders were selected for compilation of the Guide. The binders make additions, corrections, and updates easy, as well as allowing removal of sheets for xeroxing. The cover has pockets permitting insertion of a xeroxed cover sheet to customize the binder. The cover sheet was designed to meet the specifications in the Visual Management Manual. The mountain and lake design was created several years ago as a proposed emblem for the Forest.

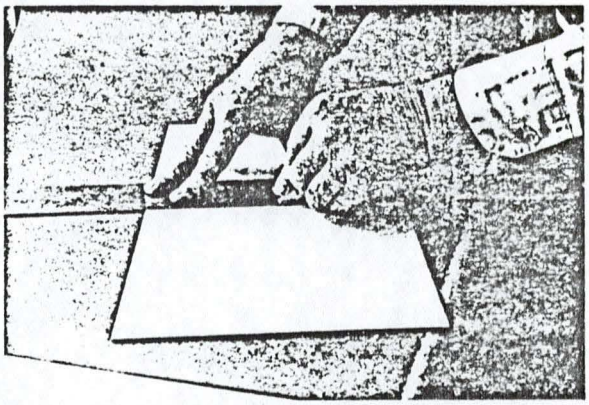
The second dispenser being used is the holder designed in Region 5 (See exhibit 1). These dispensers are used to display and distribute the most frequently requested sheets. Fabrication of them from foam core or matte board is simple and inexpensive. Design on the face of the dispensers is left to the District.

Development of Additional Sheets

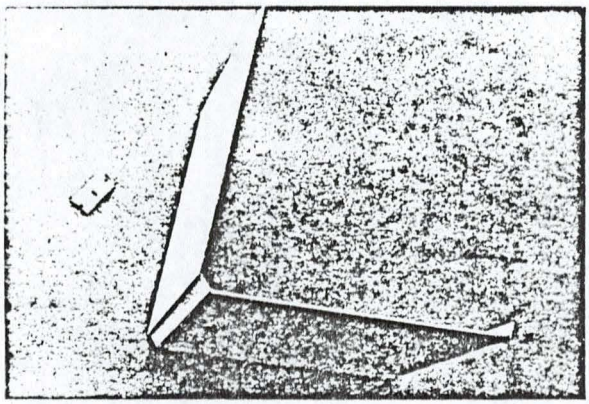
While Districts may develop sheets for activities as they need and are able, the next Forest push will be for the hiking and horseback riding activities. District needs vary considerably for information on these activities. Three Districts are well covered by a recent private publication on hiking trails compiled by the Virginia Tech Outing Club. While the information and maps are good, it is difficult to obtain a copy outside of Blacksburg. Because of this publication, the Blacksburg District wants one sheet covering all their trails. Other Districts want one sheet for each trail or group of trails.



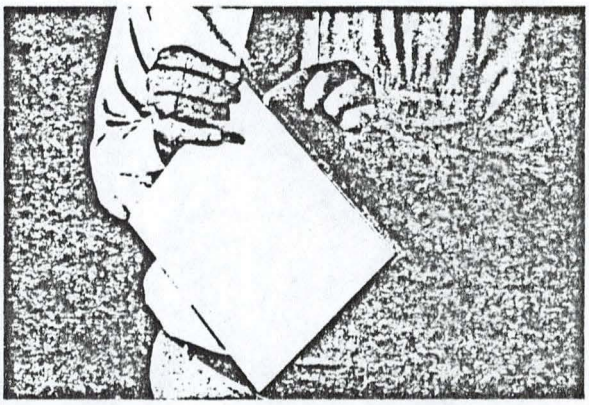
Basic box uses these dimensions. Matte board is used for this demonstration, but any suitable material will do, including wood.



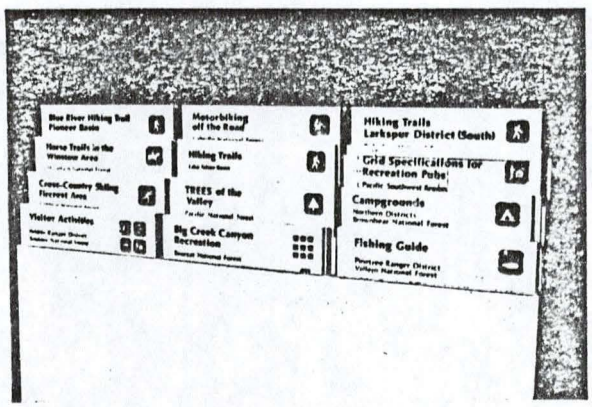
With matte board, score the fold lines with a razor.



Board bends well along scored lines.



Glue together and put a bottom in it with a separate ½" strip.



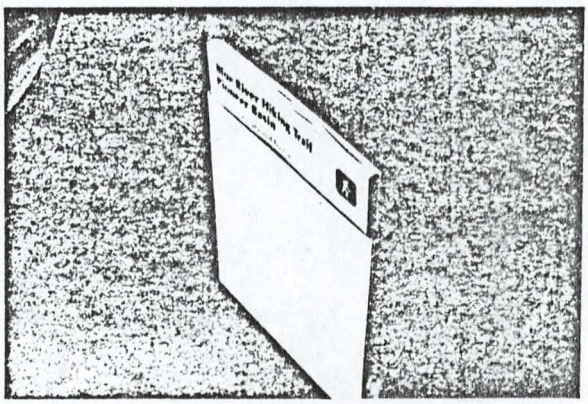


Exhibit 1

Completion of the Guide is expected to take one to two years with additions and updates always possible thereafter. Two volunteers have already been lined up to work on the hiking sheets this summer. Seasonal personnel may be available for assistance with clerical aspects, particularly on rainy days. Local Explorers and Boy Scouts are also being solicited to help with field work.

Ideas not Incorporated into the ROG

Numerous ideas were received from other Regions and Forests which were not incorporated into the Guide. Two of the more important questions were the amount of direction to give Districts and the degree of map quality to produce on sheets. Several Regions have issued Manual supplements or revised ROG Manuals for their Regions. This has not been done and is not anticipated in Region 8. On the Forest level production of new directions seemed a waste of time. It would also defeat the purpose of having a flexible system (within broad guidelines for uniformity in quality and appearance) adaptable to peculiar needs of individual Districts.

The second question is that of the map quality and detail to put on individual sheets. Some ROGs have no maps, others schematic maps, and others reproductions of primary maps. The decision on this Forest was to use traced or schematic maps for general orientation. The reasons for this were that: (1) primary, secondary, and Sportsmen's maps are available to the public at minimal cost; (2) inclusion of high standard maps on the sheets creates undue competition with private publications; and (3) inclusion of the maps would require significantly more time and cost.

Interpretive Association

A secondary objective for the project was to investigate the feasibility of developing an interpretive association that could assume part of the cost of providing information for the public and could market private materials not readily available in local stores. The goal of this objective is not only to assist the Forest in publication of information which is not fundable under current budget constraints and make available many private publications but also to expand the Forest's ability to educate the public on its mission and goals.

Potential Outlets

The major need for an interpretive association is on the Northern end of the Forest in the Blacksburg, Roanoke, and Natural Bridge areas. The Blacksburg area does have several good bookstores and outdoor equipment stores which are supported by clientele from Virginia Tech. Since closure of Appalachian Outfitters in Salem in 1981, there has been no major outlet in the Roanoke area for quality backpacking, cross-country skiing, hiking, or canoeing equipment. Books have been available only by special order from one of the bookstores. In 1983, two Blacksburg stores opened branches in Roanoke, but educational materials are still limited and oriented to specific activities. The Natural Bridge area has no current outlets for scientific, interpretive, and guide book materials.

The Forest started planning in late 1983 for expansion of the Ranger Station near Natural Bridge. One outgrowth of this was the decision to rent space for a visitors' center in Natural Bridge rather than build

a large area in the office. Rental of the building began in March 1984. This facility and the Roanoke office are considered the most promising outlets for an interpretive association.

Potential Associations

There are three possibilities for an interpretive association in this area: expand the Mount Rogers Interpretive Association, join the Eastern National Park and Monument Association, which currently operates an outlet at the Peaks of Otter, or form a new association. The Mount Rogers Interpretive Association was established in 1979, basically to cover the needs of the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area. The by-laws allow it coverage of the six counties in the Mount Rogers and Wythe Districts. The only current outlet is in the Mount Rogers Headquarters.

The Mount Rogers Association has never been strong. The membership is limited, with only about five active interested members. Materials available at the outlet are restricted to a few Golden Guide books, patches, and Smokey Bear trinkets. One problem the Association has had is the extensive time required for approval of new items to sell. The charter calls for approval in the Regional Office level; the Regional Office has often failed to respond to requests because they felt approval would be at the Supervisor's Office level. In December 1983 as a result of this project approval of items was officially transferred to the Supervisor's Office.

District personnel who have worked with the Mount Rogers Association advised against trying to expand it unless it was made a branch of a

larger Forest organization. Initial investigations with the Eastern National Park and Monument Association have indicated that joining with it would be a possibility. One drawback to this is that it would relieve the Forest of soliciting local support for the association. Local interest in forming an association has been found with several clubs and organizations. Only tentative inquiries and discussions have taken place.

Status

As of April 1984 only limited progress has been made in formation of an interpretive association. There is definitely private and organizational interest in having an association at the new visitor center. For this season, however, there are numerous logistical obstacles in getting the center itself finished and operational. An interpretive association could be functional by the '85 use season.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Response to the ROG

Response to the ROG and its development has been mixed. The part of the Guide completed has not yet been distributed to the Districts. Response from those reviewing sheets and distributing sheets at the Southern Living Show has been very positive. Others, such as Rangers, have been less enthusiastic, perhaps viewing the Guide skeptically as "something else to do" which might or might not have value.

Regional Office response has also been mixed. Individuals in Recreation have been supportive, suggesting that the Forest take the lead for the Region. Office of Information staff are less enthusiastic, perhaps interpreting the ROG as a rejection of publications developed in the past.

Several have suggested that a computerized system would be better than the ROG - more accessible to different offices, easier to maintain, perhaps less expensive. This critique is valid. Computerization of the ROG was discussed with several other Forests and with Jefferson computer personnel. The conclusion, however, was that the Forest does not have the storage capacity in-house nor the Districts the hardware to make a computerized system feasible. Storage of the data at Fort Collins would defeat the purpose of having the information readily available for the public.

Costs

One objective in developing the ROG is to provide information for the public at minimal cost. Reproduction of individual sheets costs 1-2¢ each, depending on quantities ordered. The Forest's most recent brochure printings averaged 10¢ each. Materials for production such as Chartpak lettering are quite inexpensive when purchased through GSA. No professional graphic or typesetting services are needed. The major cost element is time for field work and compilation of the information. This cost is incurred regardless of the format for displaying the information. Two ways to reduce this cost are to utilize the knowledge of District personnel familiar with the facilities and thus eliminate some field work and to use volunteers for the field work.

Costs of reproduction could be further reduced by sale of the ROG through an interpretive association. The association would assume responsibility for printing the ROG and would use the profits from sale of it for other interpretive projects. Many Forest Service employees are skeptical about the public's paying for this information. On the Pisgah Ranger District in North Carolina, however, sales of the hiking ROG have been very successful, even at the cost of $10 each. Organization of an interpretive association and development of its sales of an ROG will require more persuasion, discussion, and promotion in-Service.

Problems

Several potential problems are evident. One is that interest and

involvement will vary from District to District. Information on certain activities may become weighted toward one District. Care and supervision from the Supervisor's Office will be needed to ensure sufficient sheets for each activity and dispersion of use.

Another problem is acceptance and use of the ROG. While there is general support for the Guide, Districts are still requesting copies of their old brochures, even if the information is outdated. With increased use of the Guide this may change.

The third problem is getting the Guide completed. Additional line support for the project will be needed in order for District personnel to commit much time to it. This support may be forthcoming if the public relations potential of the Guide is recognized.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

Summary of the Project

The Jefferson National Forest has been experiencing difficulty in providing information to the public on recreation opportunities. Since 1974 developed sites have been built, dispersed use has increased, but informational materials have remained limited. In an effort to develop a system for providing information to recreationists at minimal cost, the Forest has undertaken development of a Recreation Opportunity Guide (ROG). Formation of an interpretive association to assist with this and other Forest visitor information services is being investigated.

Development of the ROG has been initiated with production of informational sheets on developed sites. Technically the sheets have been designed to display information attractively in a format consistent with the USDA Visual Management Manual. The informational content is designed to be straightforward, factual, and unromanticized, but suggestive of the setting and experience a user might expect on the site.

The ROG will be further expanded through production of activity sheets on the District level, with assistance and oversight from the Supervisor's Office. Volunteer assistance with field work is being

actively sought. Problems anticipated include sustaining District interest and commitment to complete the Guide, financing personnel and production of the Guide, and generating public and in-Service interest in using and maintaining the Guide.

The feasibility of forming an interpretive association to help with production costs of the ROG and to provide other visitor information services at the new visitor center at Natural Bridge has been tentatively investigated. There is local interest in such a venture. While in-Service support of the concept is growing, no decision or commitment has been made yet. Formation, organization, and set-up would probably take six months to a year.

Recommendations

Formation of an interpretive association should be actively pursued. The Natural Bridge center has tremendous potential for high visitation and is located in the heart of a prime recreation area. An association could assist a great deal with public relations, interpretive information and displays, and educational and informational materials.

The ROG should be completed as expeditiously as possible to stimulate Forest interest and public use. Training sessions on each District are needed. Line support of the project would facilitate its completion. Assistance from user groups is suggested to reduce Forest costs and build local support and cooperation with management in maintenance of the facilities.

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APPENDIX A

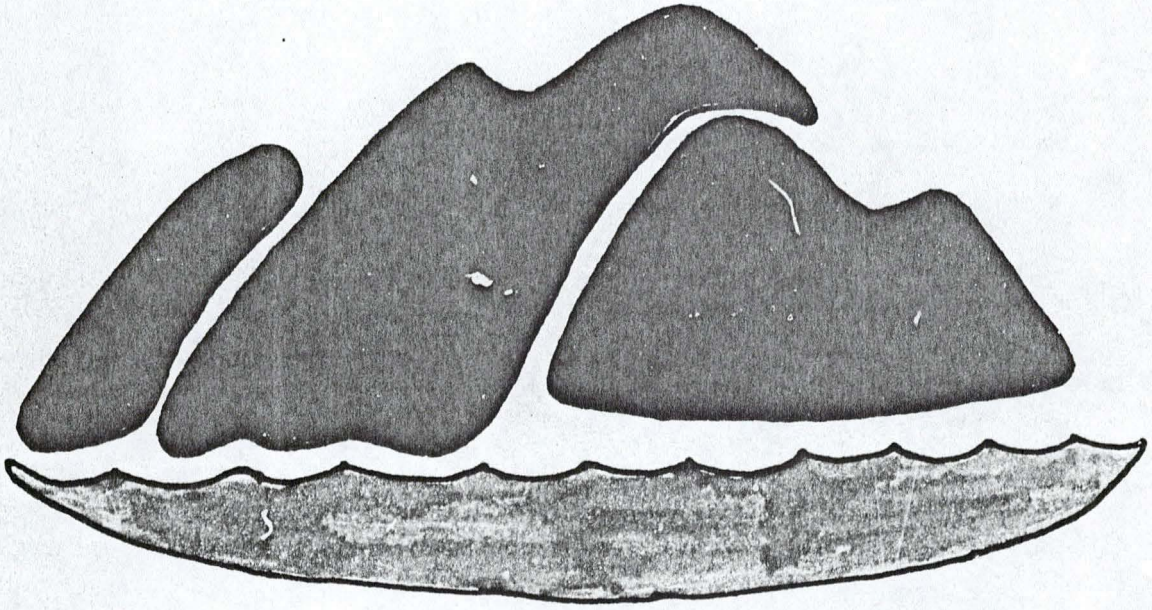
RECREATION OPPORTUNITY GUIDE

JEFFERSON NATIONAL FOREST

SAMPLE SHEETS

Recreation Opportunity Guide

Jefferson National Forest
Virginia



United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service
Southern Region

Contents

United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service Southern Region | Jefferson National Forest

Format of the Recreation Opportunity Guide

Jefferson National Forest Map

Addresses and Phone Numbers for Forest Service Offices

How to Use the Recreation Opportunity Guide

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Classes

Activities:

- Boating
- Camping
- Group Camping
- Camping with Horses
- Picnicking
- Group Picnicking
- Swimming

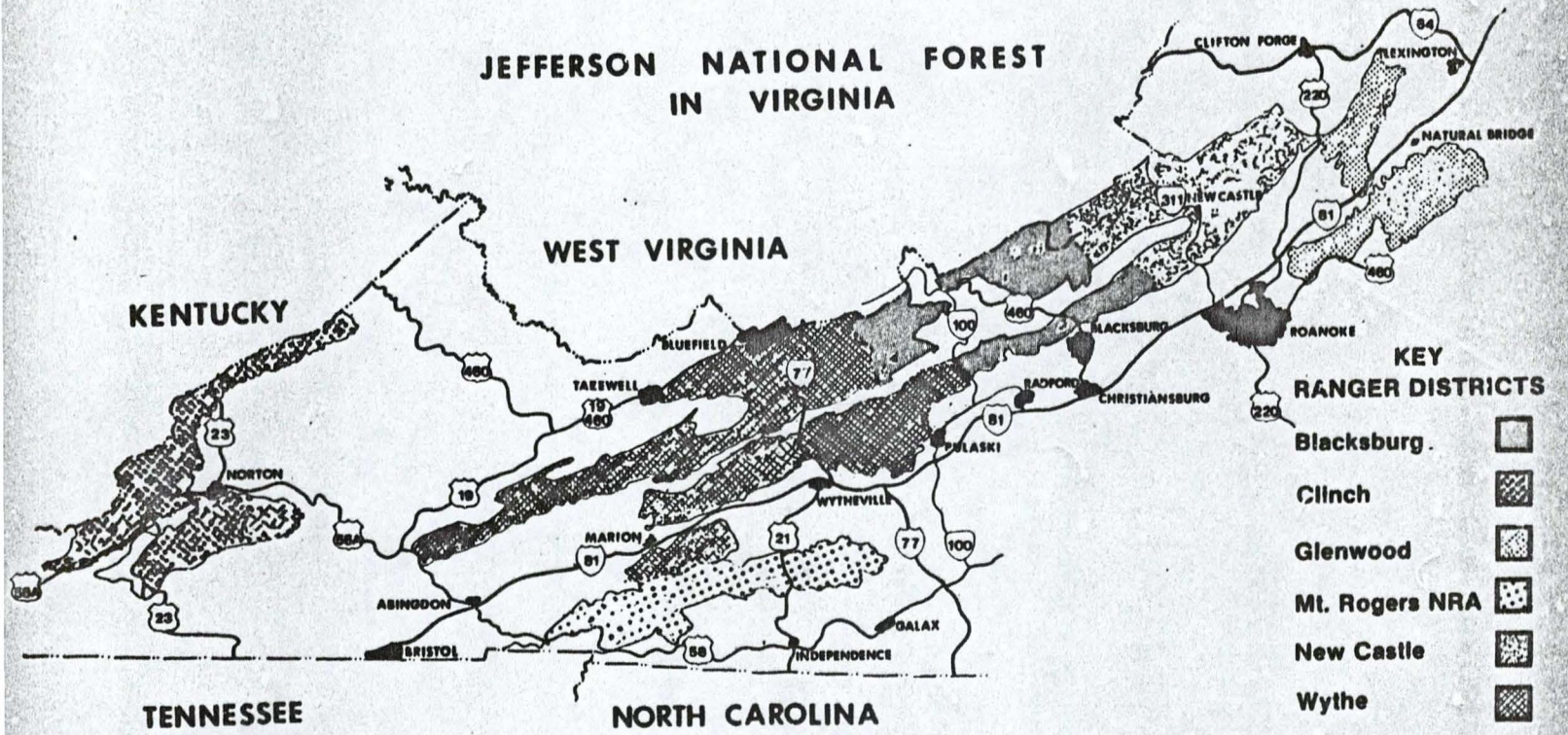
FORMAT OF THE RECREATION OPPORTUNITY GUIDE (ROG)

The Recreation Opportunity Guide is organized by activity (camping, picnicking, hiking, etc.) with a tab at the beginning of each activity section. The Table of Contents on the preceding page lists activities for which ROG information has been developed.

Under each activity tab there is a general sheet describing that activity on the Forest and outlining special rules and regulations. Then there are individual sheets for specific facilities used for that activity. These are arranged in alphabetical order by the name of the facility. Preceding the individual sheets is a list of the facilities alphabetically and by District.

There are six Ranger Districts on the Forest, which stretches across southwest Virginia for 200 miles. If you know what part of the Forest you will be visiting, it will help to look only at facilities on that District. The District name is in the heading at the top of each facility sheet.

For further information and updates on conditions or weather, contact Districts directly. A map and District addresses and phone numbers are on the next two pages.


JEFFERSON NATIONAL FOREST
IN VIRGINIA
WEST VIRGINIA
KENTUCKY
TENNESSEE
NORTH CAROLINA
CLIFTON FORGE
LEXINGTON
NATURAL BRIDGE
NEW CASTLE
BLACKSBURG
ROANOKE
RADFORD
CHRISTIANSBURG
PULASKI
BLUEFIELD
TAZEWELL
NORTON
WYTHEVILLE
MARION
ABINGDON
BRISTOL
GALAX
INDEPENDENCE
KEY
RANGER DISTRICTS
Blacksburg
Clinch
Glenwood
Mt. Rogers NRA
New Castle
Wythe

ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS FOR FOREST SERVICE OFFICES

Supervisor's Office

Jefferson National Forest
210 Franklin Road, SW
Caller Service 2900
Roanoke, VA 24001
703-982-6270

Mount Rogers National Recreation Area

U.S. Forest Service
Route 1, Box 303
Marion, VA 24354
703-783-5196

Blacksburg Ranger District

U.S. Forest Service
Route 1, Box 404
Blacksburg, VA 24060
703-552-4641

New Castle Ranger District

U.S. Forest Service
Box 246
New Castle, VA 24127
703-864-5195

Clinch Ranger District

U.S. Forest Service
Route 3, Box 820
Wise, VA 24293
703-328-2921

Wythe Ranger District

U.S. Forest Service
Route 4
Wytheville, VA 24382
703-228-5551

Glenwood Ranger District

U.S. Forest Service
Box 8
Natural Bridge Station, VA
24579
703-291-2189

.HOW TO USE THE RECREATION OPPORTUNITY GUIDE

1. Turn to the tab for the activity in which you are interested.

2. Look at the introduction and lists of facilities.

   If you are interested in a specific facility, turn to the page for that area. Names are given under the activity symbol at the top right of the page.

   If you are interested in a certain District or area, look at the list of facilities by District and then turn to facilities for that District.

   If you do not have a specific location in mind, scan the individual sheets for an area or facility that appeals to you. OR

   Read the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum descriptions on the next page. Decide what type of experience or setting you prefer and look at pages in the class you have selected.

3. Once you've selected an area, the receptionist will give you a copy of the page you are interested in.

RECREATION OPPORTUNITY SPECTRUM CLASSES

Because individuals have differing tastes for the environmental settings in which they wish to vacation, each of the facilities and areas in the ROG has been ranked according to its Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) class. The ROS classes represent a continuum, or spectrum, of settings ranging from primitive to urban. Each class on the scale has a unique combination of physical, social, and managerial conditions. By looking at the ROS class for each facility, you can anticipate the type setting and experience you may encounter.

P	SPNM	SPM	RN	R	U
Primitive	Semi-primitive non-motorized	Semi-primitive motorized	Roaded natural	Rural	Urban

← ---------- →

More remote
More primitive

Less remote
Less primitive

Primitive (P) - These areas are essentially unmodified natural environments with large acreages (5000+) far removed (at least three miles) from open roads. The likelihood of contact with other users is very low and evidence of other area users is minimal. Motorized use is not permitted. There are no Primitive areas on the Jefferson National Forest.

Semi-primitive non-motorized (SPNM) - Although not a wilderness setting, these areas are usually fairly large (2500+ acres) and removed from open roads. Motorized use is not permitted. While the likelihood of contact with other users is low, there is often evidence of other users, such as old campfire spots.

Semi-primitive motorized (SPM) - These areas are similar to those in the SPNM class, but motorized use is permitted. Travelway conditions limit access to motorcycles, four-wheel drives, or boats.

Roaded natural (RN) - Areas in this setting are accessible on paved or low standard roads. Facilities are built to low-moderate standards; vault toilets, gravel roads, and hand pumps would be typical in a campground. Evidence of other users is high and the likelihood of contact with other users is high, particularly on long summer week ends.

Rural (R) - This setting includes many of the lands adjacent to communities and agricultural lands. Paved roads and high standard facilities (flush toilets, water spigots, etc.) are normal. Evidence of other users is frequent.

Urban (U) - This setting includes city park-type areas and highly developed facilities where social interaction is high.

Camping

United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service Southern Region | Jefferson National Forest

Contents

Campgrounds, Listed Alphabetically

Bark Camp
Beartree
Cane Patch
Cave Mountain Lake
Cave Springs
Comers Rock
Craig Creek
Fox Creek
Grindstone
High Knob
Hurricane
Hussy Mountain
North Creek
The Pines
Raccoon Branch
Stony Fork
Walnut Flats
White Pine
White Rocks

Campgrounds, Listed by District

Blacksburg
Walnut Flats
White Pine
White Rocks

Clinch
Bark Camp
Cane Patch
Cave Springs
High Knob

Glenwood
Cave Mountain Lake
North Creek

Mt. Rogers
Beartree
Comers Rock
Fox Creek
Grindstone
Hurricane
Hussy Mountain
Raccoon Branch

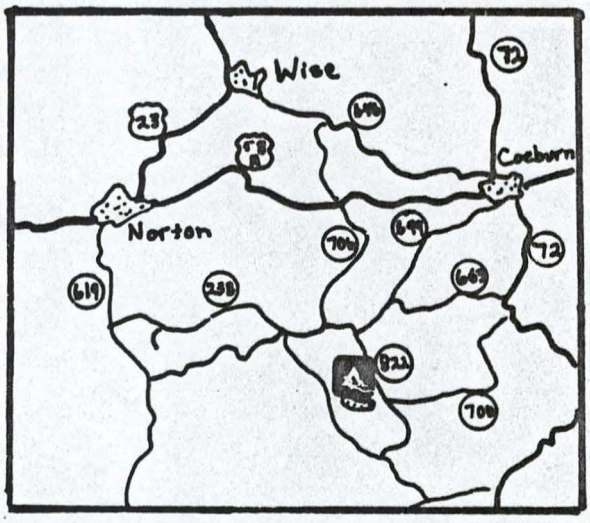
New Castle
Craig Creek
The Pines

Wythe
Stony Fork

Camping–Picnicking–Boating

United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service Southern Region
Jefferson National Forest
Clinch Ranger District
703-328-2931

Bark Camp



Location
Bark Camp Recreation Area is in Scott County, Virginia, 12 miles southeast of Norton.

Access
From Norton take US 58 A east 6.3 miles to Tacoma; then right on VA 706. Follow 706 south for 4.1 miles, turn left on VA 699 and follow it 0.3 miles. Turn right on gravel VA 822 and go 1.7 miles to the recreation area.

Facilities Available

Day use area
60-acre warm water lake for fishing and boating (electric motors only).
Paved boat launching ramp.
Parking for vehicles and trailers.
10 picnic units with wooden tables and grills.
Vault toilets.
Central garbage containers.
Trail to Kitchen Rock, ½ mile long.
Lake shore trail, 3¼ miles long.
Season: April 2 - October 15
Fee: None

Family camping area
18 single units, 7 double units.
Each unit has parking spur, tent pad, wooden picnic table, lantern post.
Flush toilets.
Central water fountains and garbage containers.
Trailer waste disposal station.
Season: May 14 - October 15
Fee: $5 per unit per night.

Attractions
Lake for fishing and boating.
Numerous trails for hiking, fishing and wildlife watching.

Elevation: 2700 feet

Climate
Bark Camp is warm and sunny in summer (70°s - 80°s), but cooled by breezes off the water. Conditions will vary from chilly to snowy during other seasons.

Vegetation
The campground and most of the land surrounding the lake is wooded. There are mowed open grasses near the picnic area. Stumps and trees were left in the lake during construction to provide better habitat for fish and other wildlife.

Pattern of Use: Moderate

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
Rural (R)

3/84

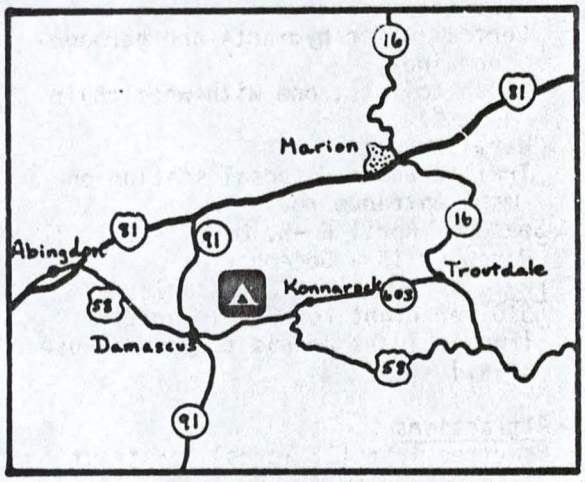
Camping–Picnicking–Swimming

United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service Southern Region
Jefferson National Forest
Mt. Rogers National Recreation Area
703-783-5196

Beartree

Location
Beartree Recreation Area is in Washington County, Virginia, 17 miles east of Abingdon and 7 miles east of Damascus.

Access
From I-81 at Abingdon take US 58 (exit 8) south 10 miles to Damascus. From Damascus continue on 58 for 7 miles to the recreation area entrance (paved FS 837). From 58 the day use area is 1 mile, the group camping area 1½ miles, and the family camping areas 3½ and 4 miles.



Facilities, Seasons, and Fees

Fisherman's parking lot
Lake stocked with trout.
Lake shore trail.
Carry down access for boats. No motors allowed. Fishing prohibited in the swimming area.
Season: All year, but not plowed in winter.
Fee: None.

Day use area
300-foot swimming beach open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
2 bathhouses with showers and flush toilets.
13 picnic units, each with one or more wooden tables and a grill.
Lake shore trail.
Many facilities accessible to wheelchairs.
Season: Picnicking: April 6 - Oct. 30
Swimming: May 15 - September 16
Fee: (applicable May 15 - Sept. 16)
$2 per carload or
$.50 per person for walk-ins, commercial groups.

Group picnic area
Large picnic pavilion with 20 sheltered tables and a cooking grill.
20 tables and 6 grills outside.
2 horseshoe pits.
Court for volleyball and other games.
Season: April 6 - October 30
Fee: $10 - $15 (includes access to day use area)
Reservations required.

Group camping areas
1. Walk-in area
4 clusters, each with 4 tent pads.
Area is a short walk from the parking lot.
Picnic tables and fire rings.
Chemical toilets.
Central water hydrants and garbage containers.
Season: All year.
Fee: $10 per night (includes access to day use area).
Reservations required.

2. Drive-in area
3 clusters, one each for 4,5, and 7 families. Each cluster has paved spurs, picnic tables and fire ring.
Flush toilets. Showers.
Central water hydrants and garbage containers.
Facilities accessible to wheelchairs.
No hook-ups.
Trailer waste disposal station on main entrance road.
Season: April 1 - December 1
Fee: $15 - $20 per night (includes access to day use area).
Reservations required.

Family camping areas
55 Single units
29 Double units
Each unit has parking spur, wooden picnic table, and fireplace. Some have tent pads.
Recreation vehicles up to 32 feet can be accommodated.
Central water hydrants and garbage containers.
Flush toilets, one with wheelchair access.
Warm showers.
Trailer waste disposal station on main entrance road.

Season: April 6 -8, May 1 - Oct. 1, November 15 - December 3.

Fee: $6 per night for single units. $10 per night for double units. (Fee includes access to the day use area.)

Attractions
Beartree lake (12 acres) for trout fishing and swimming.
Hiking trails - three connections to the Iron Mountain Trail, one to the Appalachian Trail.
Nature trail with old beaver ponds.
Straight Branch Creek the length of the valley.
Paved roads for bicycle riding.
Short drive to Whitetop Mountain, highest auto road in Virginia.

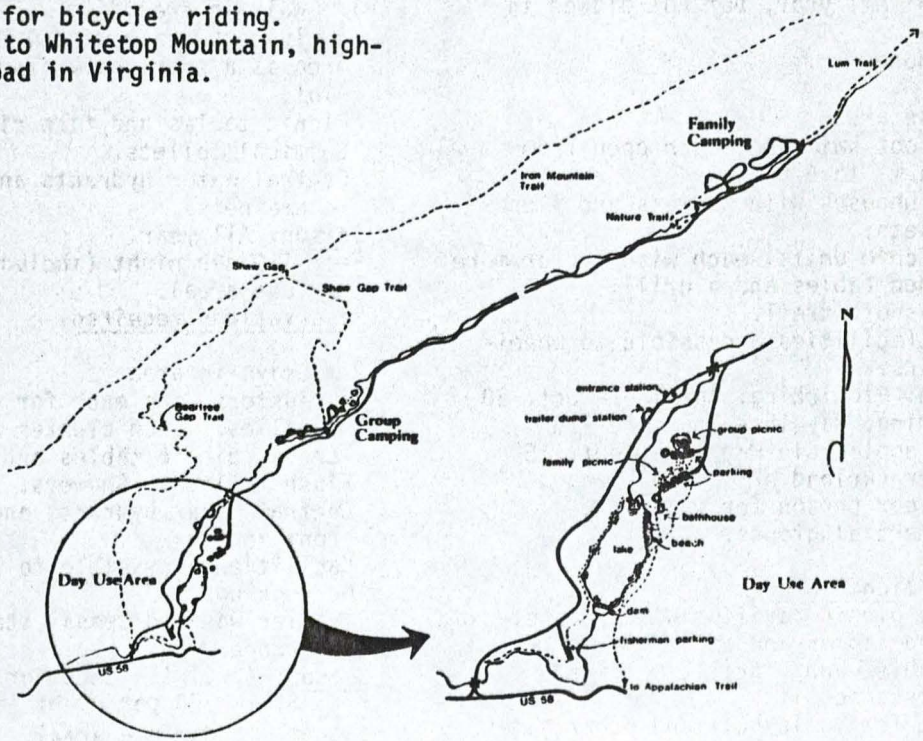
Elevation
Lake: 3010 feet.
Family camping area: 3300 feet.

Climate
Summer days are warm (60°s - 70°s), evenings chilly (40° - 60°s). Frosts can be expected late in spring and early in fall.

Vegetation
Beartree is located in Straight Branch Valley, a four-mile long valley with swampy bottomlands, birches and rhododendron along the drains, and Appalachian hardwoods on the slopes. The area is noted for its beaver, whose ponds once flooded parts of the valley. The high elevation makes insects little problem.

Pattern of Use
Week days: Low
Week ends: Moderate - heavy
Holidays: Heavy - full

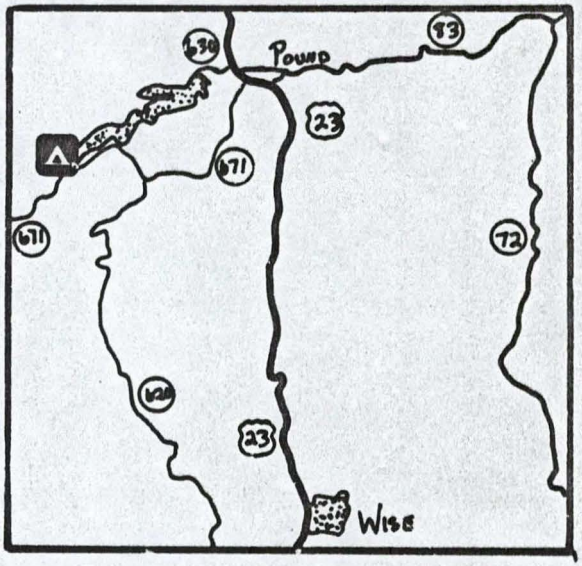
Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
Recreation Area: Rural (R)
Adjacent lands: Roaded natural (RN)



Camping

United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service Southern Region | Jefferson National Forest Clinch Ranger District 703-328-2931

Cane Patch



Location
Cane Patch Campground is in Wise County, Virginia, 6½ miles west of Pound.

Access
Take US 23 to Pound. Turn west on paved VA 671 one mile south of Pound. Follow 671 west for 6.5 miles to the campground.

Facilities Available
35 camping units, each with parking spur, picnic table, fireplace or grill. Spaces for recreation vehicles up to 32 feet.
Bathhouse on the hill with flush toilets and showers.
Vault toilets.
Central water fountains and garbage containers.
Trailer waste disposal station.
Playground equipment.
Volleyball and basketball courts.
Amphitheater.

Attractions
Only developed campground at North Fork of Pound Lake.
Within walking distance of Phillips Creek swimming area.
Large open areas for games.

Elevation: 1600 feet.

Climate
During summer Cane Patch is usually quite warm (70°s - 80°s). Fall and spring days may be chilly.

Vegetation
Cane Patch is on a flat at the end of North Fork of Pound Lake. Most of the units are open and grassy. Trees line the water's edge and cover the adjacent hills.

Season: May 14 - October 15

Fee: $5 per unit per night.

Pattern of Use
Week days: Low
Week ends, holidays: Moderate - heavy.

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
Rural (R)

Camping with Horses

United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service Southern Region
Jefferson National Forest

Contents

Campgrounds with Space for Horses, Listed Alphabetically

Craig Creek
Fox Creek
Hussy Mountain
The Pines
White Pine

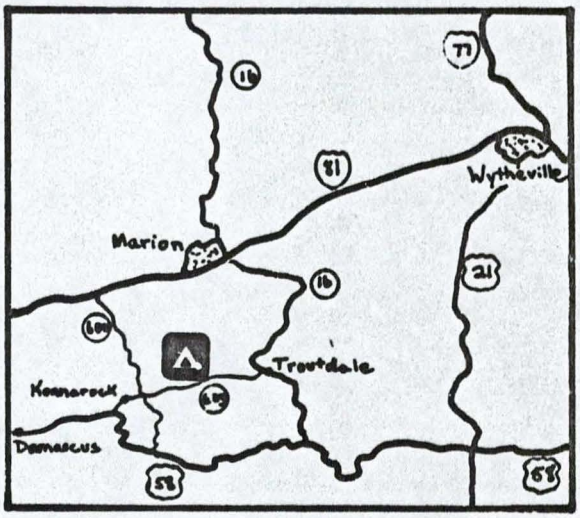
Campgrounds with Space for Horses, Listed by District.

Blacksburg - White Pine
Mt. Rogers - Fox Creek
Hussy Mountain
New Castle - Craig Creek
The Pines

Camping

United States Department of Agriculture
Forest Service Southern Region
Jefferson National Forest
Mt. Rogers National Recreation Area
703-783-5196

Fox Creek



Location
Fox Creek Horse Campground is in Fairwood Valley in Smyth County, Virginia, 20 miles south of Marion.

Access
From I-81 take exit 16 at Marion onto VA 16 south. Go 16 miles to Troutdale, turn right onto VA 603, and proceed west 4 miles to the camping area.

Facilities Available
Horse corral.
Large open field for camping with hitching rails around the perimeter.
Vault toilets.
No potable water. Stream water available for horses.

Attractions
Easy access to Virginia Highlands Horse Trail.
Rustic facilities for camping with horses.
Fishing nearby in Fox Creek.

Elevation: 3500 feet.

Climate
Fox Creek is generally warm and sunny (70°s) in the summer. Showers and morning fogs are common. Frosts and snows come early in fall and late in spring due to the elevation.

Vegetation
Fox Creek is an open grassy area with hardwoods around the perimeter.

Season: All Year

Fee: None

Pattern of Use
Week days: Low
Week ends: Moderate - heavy
Holidays: heavy

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
Rural (R)

Camping

United States Department of Agriculture · Forest Service Southern Region · Jefferson National Forest Mt. Rogers National Recreation Area 703-783-5196

Hussy Mountain

Location
Hussy Mountain Campground is in Wythe County, Virginia, 16½ miles southeast of Wytheville.

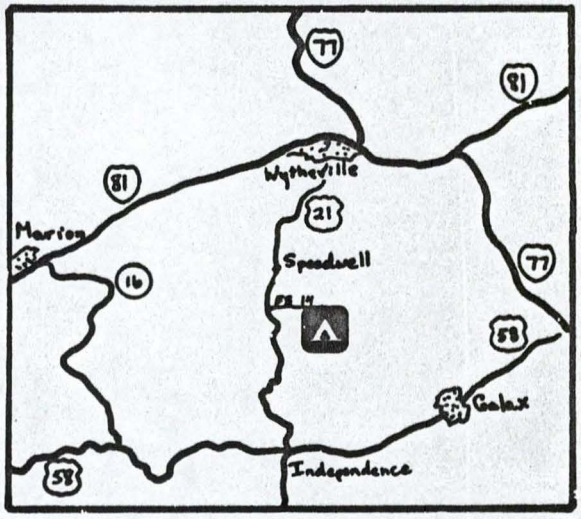
Access
From I-81 take exit 20, 21, or 22 at Wytheville onto US 11. On the west end of Main St. turn off US 11 onto US 21 south. Follow 21 south for 14½ miles to FS 14 (3 miles past Speedwell). Turn left on gravel FS 14 and follow it east 2 miles to the campground.

Facilities Available
3 group camping loops.
Each loop has parking space for 4 - 5 vehicles and trailers, wooden picnic tables, fire ring, horse stalls, hitching rails, and garbage containers.
Additional central parking is available, with camping space accessible by foot.
Chemical toilet.
Hand pump for water.

Attractions
East Fork of Dry Run through the area for fishing, wading, and watering horses.
Group camping loops.
Space for horse trailers and horses.
Easy access to Virginia Highlands Horse Trail.
Good hunting and fishing.

Elevation: 3000 feet.

Climate
Summer days are warm (70°s), evenings cool (60°s).



Vegetation
Hussy Mountain is in the East Fork of Dry Run valley. The area is well shaded with hardwoods, hemlocks, and pines creating a cool micro-climate.

Season: All Year

Fee: None

Pattern of Use
Week Days: Low
Week ends, holidays: Moderate
Opening days of hunting and fishing seasons: Heavy.

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
Roaded natural (RN)